

1 What is claimed is:

2 1. A keyboard enclosure comprising:

3 a region forming a cavity; and

4 a node support located in the cavity and operable to support a node of a
5 switch membrane assembly.

1 2. The enclosure of claim 1 wherein the enclosure includes one cavity.

1 3. The enclosure of claim 1 wherein the cavity has a substantial U-shape.

1 4. The enclosure of claim 1 wherein the cavity has a substantial U-shape and
2 extends substantially 15.5 inches.

1 5. The enclosure of claim 1 wherein the cavity has a substantial U-shape,
2 extends substantially 15.5 inches, and is substantially 0.5 inches deep.

1 6. The enclosure of claim 1 wherein the enclosure includes thirteen node
2 supports, each disposed in the cavity.

1 7. The enclosure of claim 1 wherein the node support has a cylindrical shape.

1 8. The enclosure of claim 7 wherein the node support is hollow.

1 9. The enclosure of claim 1 wherein the cavity has a substantial U-shape and a
2 bottom wall, and the node support extends from the bottom wall.

1 10. The enclosure of claim 1 wherein the node support includes an end located
2 at an entrance of the cavity.

1 11. The enclosure of claim 1 wherein the enclosure includes a floor and a rib to
2 maintain the position of the node support relative to the floor.

1 12. The enclosure of claim 11 wherein the enclosure includes at least two ribs
2 each operable to maintain the position of the node support relative to the
3 floor.

1 13. The enclosure of claim 12 wherein the enclosure includes at least two node
2 supports, and one of the ribs extends between two node supports.

1 14. The enclosure of claim 11 wherein:

2 the cavity has a substantial U-shape, a bottom wall, and a sidewall,

3 the node support extends from the bottom wall, and

4 the enclosure includes at least two ribs that extend between the node
5 support and at least one side wall.

1 15. A keyboard comprising:

2 a plurality of keys, each movable relative to the other keys;

3 a switch membrane assembly including a plurality of circuits each having
4 a node corresponding to a respective key, wherein each circuit is
5 operable to generate a signal when a key corresponding to the
6 circuit's node is moved relative to the node;

7 an upper enclosure to hold the keys; and

8 a lower enclosure to support the switch membrane assembly, the lower
9 enclosure including:

10 a region forming a cavity and operable to stiffen the lower
11 enclosure, and

12 a node support located in the cavity and operable to support a
13 node of the switch membrane assembly.

1 16. The keyboard of claim 15 wherein the lower enclosure includes thirteen
2 node supports, each operable to support a respective node of the switch
3 membrane assembly.

1 17. The keyboard of claim 15 wherein:

2 the lower enclosure includes two legs operable to support a portion of the
3 lower enclosure above a surface, and

4 the region extends between the two legs.

1 18. The keyboard of claim 15 wherein the lower enclosure includes a rib
2 operable to maintain the position of the node support relative to the node of
3 the switch membrane assembly.

1 19. A computer system comprising:

2 computer circuitry for performing computer functions; and

3 a keyboard operable to provide data to the circuitry and including:

4 a plurality of keys, each movable relative to the other keys,

5 a switch membrane assembly including a plurality of circuits each
6 having a node corresponding to a respective key, wherein
7 each circuit is operable to generate a signal when a key
8 corresponding to the circuit's node is moved relative to the
9 node,

10 an upper enclosure to hold the keys, and

11 a lower enclosure to support the switch membrane assembly, the
12 lower enclosure including:

13 a region forming a cavity, and

14 a node support located in the cavity and operable to
15 support a node of the switch membrane assembly.

1 20. A method for supporting a switch membrane assembly of a keyboard,
2 comprising:

3 forming a cavity in a region of a lower enclosure of a keyboard to stiffen
4 the lower enclosure;

5 locating a node support in the cavity to support a circuit node of the
6 switch membrane assembly.

1 21. The method of claim 20 further comprising locating a rib in the cavity to
2 maintain the position of the node support relative to a floor of the lower
3 enclosure.

1 22. The method of claim 21 wherein locating the rib includes extending the rib
2 between the node support and a wall of the cavity.

1 23. The method of claim 21 wherein locating the rib includes extending the rib
2 between two node supports.

1 24. A method for generating a signal, the method comprising:

2 moving a key of a keyboard to move a top node of a switch membrane
3 assembly toward a corresponding bottom node of the assembly;

4 contacting the bottom node with the top node to generate a signal; and

5 supporting the bottom node with a node support when the top node
6 contacts the bottom node.

1 25. The method of claim 24 wherein moving the key of the keyboard includes
2 pushing the key toward the top node.